

SETTLING IN PRE-SCHOOL PROCEDURE

Statement of Intent

We want children to feel safe, stimulated & happy in the pre-school and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well being and their role as active partners with the pre-school.

Aim

We aim to make the pre-school a welcoming place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

In order to accomplish this, we aim to create a partnership with parents in the following ways;

- Before a child attends, we use a variety of ways to provide parents/carers with information, including our prospectus & policies through our new starter pack, our website and our new starter day in July
- By creating opportunities for the exchange of information and a shared approach to the child's Record of Achievement.
- By ensuring opportunities for parents to inform the pre-school about their children's current achievements and interests.
- By introducing flexible settling-in procedures, if appropriate, to meet the needs of individual families and children.
- By making clear to families from the outset that they will be welcome and supported by the pre-school while their child attends.
- We encourage parents to complete an "All About Me" booklet and entry profile with their child prior to starting at the pre-school so that the child's keyworker has some background to the child's family, likes and dislikes.
- A keyperson is allocated to each child and their family before they start.
- Younger children will take longer to settle in, as will children who have not previously spent time away from home. Children who have had a period of absence may also need re-settling.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back and when.
- We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle, we believe that a child finds it distressing to be left. This is especially the case with very young children.
- We allow children to have comforters such as favourite teddies or dummies

Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious and unhappy. Our settling-in procedures aim to help parents and children to feel comfortable in the pre-school, and to ensure that children can benefit from what the group has to offer and feel confident that their parents will return at the end of the session. We follow the five step process;

1. Parent comes into pre-school with their child, key carer plays with child, with parent/carer 'disengaged'. Once child has made eye contact and/or smiled at key carer move to step two....
2. Key carer plays with child, parent moves across room to get an object, child continues playing, parent comes straight back.
3. Parent goes out of sight – child happy does not look anxious and carries on playing = step four child shows distress – back to step 2
4. Adult tells child 'I'm going to the office to get you a sticker I will be straight back' child happy ... parent does what he/she said, if child not happy, keycarer and child get sticker with parent and go back to step 3 then try 4 again
5. Once child is happy for parent to go for 1 minute to get sticker, parent tells child 'I'm going to go for 5 minutes and then be back, if achieved, child is 'bonded' with key carer and can be comforted if need be when parent leaves them in session.

👉 Most children settle using this method within an hour, some take only minutes, others may take days.

👉 If the parent is anxious then the child will be.

👉 Bonding with parents will make the process quicker and more effective.

Week 1

Session 1 - parent comes with child and follows 5 steps, if all goes well parent leaves or they can take child after an hour and try again next time

Session 2 – parent stays for as long as needed

Session 3 – if child very distressed, parent is called after 1 hour, then go back through the 5 steps.

Should your child take time to settle we will work and liaise with the parent/carer to ensure that the child does not become too distressed, we will keep in constant contact and if necessary ask you stay in the session for a certain amount of time which will gradually decrease as they become more settled and independent.